

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION

RUSSELL, et al,	§	
Plaintiffs	§	
	§	No. 4:19-cv-00226
v.	§	Hon. Lee H. Rosenthal
	§	U.S. District Judge
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS, et al,	§	
Defendants	§	

REPORT OF SHERIFF ED GONZALEZ MAY 22, 2020

We reported last week on the orders from the felony judges prohibiting appearances in court by any defendant who previously tested positive for COVID-19. The misdemeanor judges likewise expressed to the Sheriff's Office their desire not to have in their courtrooms inmates who had tested positive.

The Sheriff's Office is working to set up a procedure for video conferences to substitute for court appearances for inmates who previously tested positive. At least two of the felony judges amended their orders early this week to permit video conferences for such inmates, and all the judges have expressed a willingness to proceed by video for the foreseeable future. No video hearings have yet taken place, but the goal is to have them start by the end of next week.

This must be a short-term-only fix. A medically acceptable process must be identified to permit inmates who have fully recovered to attend court proceedings. The HCSO continues to work on that objective.

The overall jail population crept over 8000 this week.

The Sheriff provides the following requested information:

1. As of May 22, 2020, there were 6,117 felony pre-trial detainees.
2. From the original list of 426 detainees charged with non-violent offenses with no prior violent convictions, the total released is 163.
3. Regarding the inmates:
 - 740 have tested positive.
 - 587 of those who tested positive have recovered, and 115 of those who tested positive have yet to show any symptoms.
 - 4 are hospitalized.
4. The number of inmates in observational quarantine (exposed but have not shown symptoms or tested positive) is 1,534. The number of inmates in buffer quarantine (monitored for symptoms before being permitted into the general population) is now 623.
5. Regarding the HSCO staff:
 - 300 have tested positive, including 279 who work in the jail.
 - 213 of those who tested positive have recovered and returned to work.
 - 17 are hospitalized.

Respectfully submitted.

/s/ Murray Fogler

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ATTORNEYS FOR SHERIFF ED GONZALEZ

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on May 22, 2020, a copy of this document was served on counsel of record via electronic filing in accordance with the USDC Southern District of Texas Procedures for Electronic Filing.

/s/ Murray Fogler

Murray Fogler